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ABSTRACT

This resource booklet provides teachers with information on the role of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). It also contains activities that teachers can use with children to help them understand the role of UNICEF and the rights outlined in the CRC. The convention guarantees children the right to: (1) affection, love, and understanding; (2) adequate nutrition and medical care; (3) protection against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation; (4) free education and full opportunity for play and recreation; (5) a name and a nationality; (6) special care if disabled; (7) relief in times of disaster; (8) education to learn to be useful members of society and to develop individual abilities; (9) upbringing in the spirit of universal peace and brotherhood; and finally, (10) to enjoy these rights regardless of race, color, sex, religion, or national or social origin. (MDM)

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REACHING THE CHILDREN

ED 384 439

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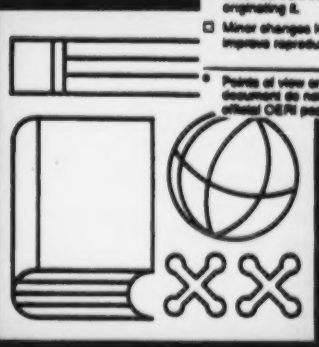
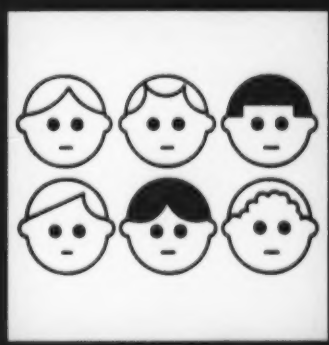
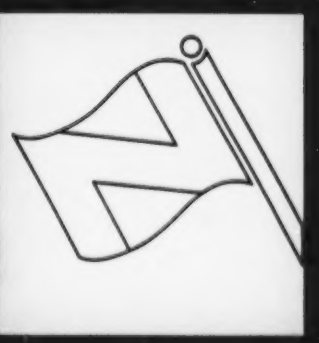
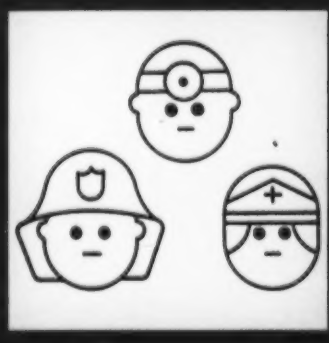
In Celebration of The Rights of the Child

A UNICEF activity-based teacher's unit by Marilyn Stroud, elementary teacher and UNICEF volunteer









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A Word to the Teacher

Every year, UNICEF has a high profile in schools across the United States because of the National UNICEF Day campaign. Everybody recognizes the UNICEF orange box, right?

But, are you aware that UNICEF has a wealth of resources that can help you enhance your curriculum? Information on health care, clean water, nutrition, education, and children's rights are available from UNICEF along with this ACTIVITY-BASED UNIT to supplement your courses of study and assist you in integrating UNICEF's materials around the theme of The Rights of the Child.

In 1989 the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. As of March 1993, this treaty had been ratified by 131 countries and is now law in those countries.

The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* has not been ratified in the United States. Supporters should contact President Clinton and urge him to forward the *Convention* to the Senate for consideration. This Resource Booklet is designed to help you acquire current information on how UNICEF is meeting the needs of children around the world. Innovative teaching aids are included so that you can create exciting programs for your class. As a teacher, I have found that students respond to activities related to their own experiences and will jump at the opportunity to learn how children live and play in other countries.

Through the vehicles of language arts, mathematics, social studies, art, science, and the creative arts, children will investigate The Rights of the Child. UNICEF helps with the resources. You facilitate the learning. The children provide the enthusiasm. And together we all help UNICEF help others by raising funds at Halloween.

The challenge is there. Grab this opportunity to explore the world of children through the focus of UNICEF and The Rights of the Child. You and your class will have a wonderful experience.

Happy Teaching.

Marilyn Stroud

The U.S. Committee for UNICEF thanks the following individuals for volunteering their talents and services:

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1 THE RIGHT TO AFFECTION LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING

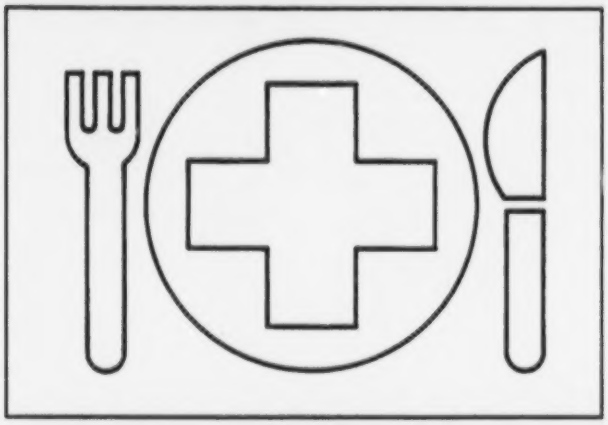
To a child, affection is just as important as food. The tradition of close-knit and extended families and of community support is very strong in many developing countries. Older children help to care for their younger sisters and brothers.

However, war, famine, and poverty often cause the breakdown of even the strongest family units, leaving children orphaned or abandoned. UNICEF helps to reunite families and to keep them together.

For example, in Mozambique, UNICEF worked with local organizations to set up child-care centers in villages and towns, so that orphaned or abandoned children would not wander to cities and lose all connections with their families and communities. With the help of local volunteers who trace the child's background, these children are placed within their extended family, if it can be located, or in adoptive homes. To help the family cope with an extra child, the child's food and clothing are paid for. And parents who are forced to go far from home in search of food can temporarily leave their children in these child-care centers.

With the security of a loving family, poverty cannot completely mar the joy of childhood.

2 THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE NUTRITION AND MEDICAL CARE



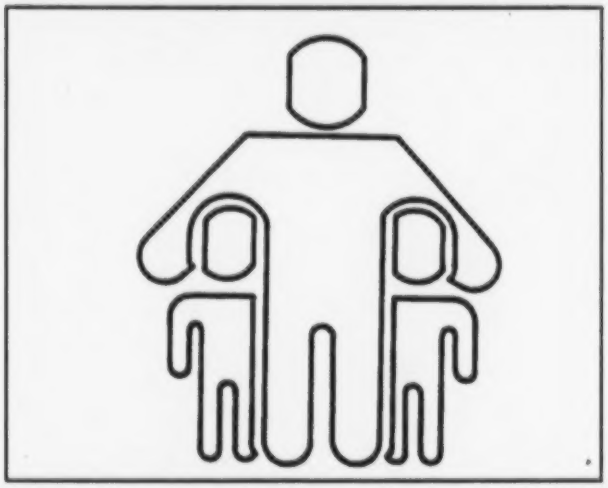
In 1946, UNICEF was created to provide assistance for the children of war-torn Europe.

UNICEF continues to provide health care to reduce child death and illness, using simple and inexpensive techniques. Nutritional monitoring is done by measuring growth.

Diarrhea is one of the largest killers of children. Children with diarrhea are given a drink of sugar, salt, and water (ORT). Infant nutrition is assured by promoting breast feeding. UNICEF has successfully reached its goal of immunizing 80 percent of the world's children overall.

In Madagascar, UNICEF is working with communities, especially women's groups, in an effort to improve children's health and nutrition. Activities include primary health care for mothers, home food production, and women's cooperatives and other businesses to increase family income. These simple techniques saved about 1.5 million children last year. By extending primary health care and nutrition, UNICEF hopes to cut the child death rate in half by the year 2000.

3 THE RIGHT TO PROTECTION AGAINST ALL FORMS OF NEGLECT, CRUELTY AND EXPLOITATION



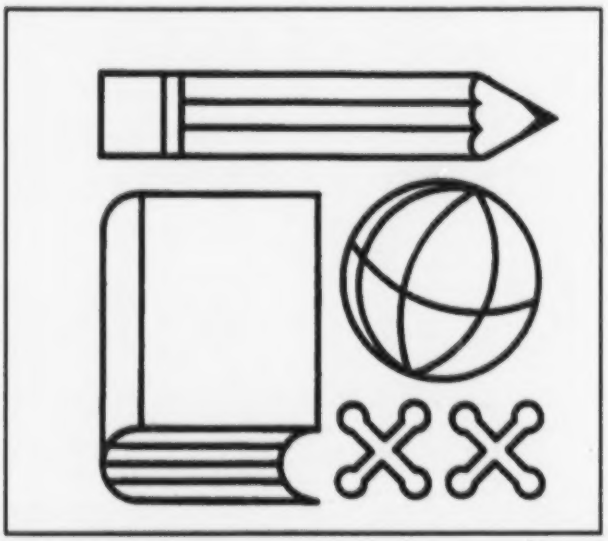
"I went to live on the street because my mother is very poor," says Antonio Pinella, aged 10, from Colombia. "There are eight children. So I went off to get food for myself. I looked after cars for 50 or 60 pesos a day.

"It is difficult living on the street. There is just nowhere to wash. I don't like asking for money from strange people. On the streets I sleep with my friends. I often get cold at night and sometimes get sick."

In Latin America alone, about 50 million children live in great hardship - including street children and children affected by war. This is almost twice the population of Canada.

In Colombia, UNICEF provided money for programs to protect children who spend all or part of their days on city streets. Drop-in centers and libraries have been set up to provide recreation and help with schoolwork, but the main activities help children, youths, and women develop businesses to increase family income.

4 THE RIGHT TO FREE EDUCATION AND FULL OPPORTUNITY FOR PLAY AND RECREATION

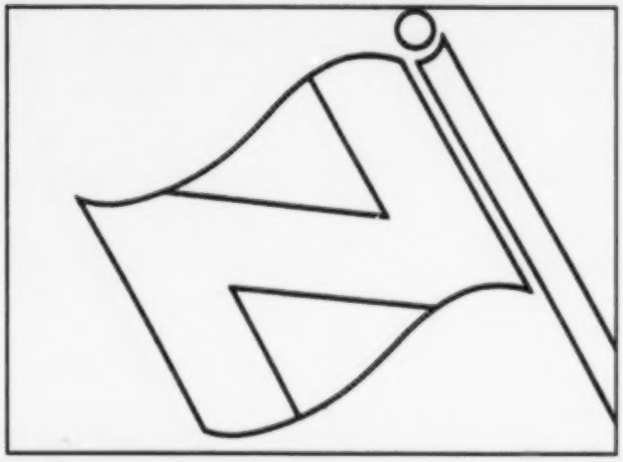


In order to grow and develop, children need emotional, physical and intellectual activity. For little children, toys are as important to learning as books are to older children.

Learning can be informal as well as formal. UNICEF has always advocated free primary education for all children; it has also started to promote non-formal learning opportunities in cases where attending school is not possible. One third of children in primary school in developing countries drop out before they have basic literacy skills. The main reason is poverty. Parents cannot afford the education and the children must often work to help support the family. Young girls represent the largest portion of children who have no opportunity for formal education, because in many cultures girls are not valued as much as boys.

So, as well as helping to equip schools and train teachers, UNICEF is promoting non-formal learning. For example, UNICEF is supporting a literacy program in Ghana for adults—particularly women—and for children not attending school.

5 THE RIGHT TO A NAME AND NATIONALITY



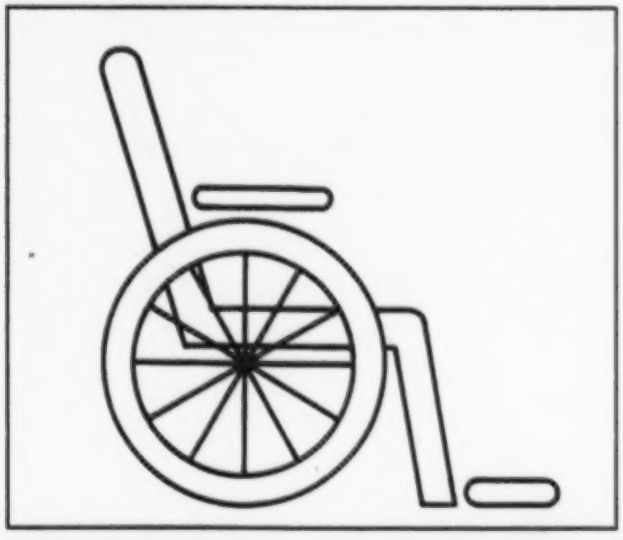
War continues to jeopardize the most vulnerable—the women and children. To escape the fighting, people often flee to nearby countries for safety. In those host countries, one will usually find a number of refugee settlements. Now there are about 25 million refugees. Of these, about 75 percent are women and children.

To be a refugee means to be without roots, to live in a state of uncertainty about your destiny and your future nationality. You have no way of telling whether you will see your sister, brother, grandparents, aunts or uncles, ever again.

If you were very young when you became a refugee, you might not even know them. You might not know your birthday or your name.

To be deprived of a name and nationality is to be deprived of identity as an individual. UNICEF works on both sides of a conflict in order to provide aid to refugees—basic health care, nutrition, and shelter as well as education. When the crisis is over, UNICEF helps to reunite families and helps the refugees begin the process of rebuilding their identities and their lives.

6 THE RIGHT TO SPECIAL CARE IF HANDICAPPED



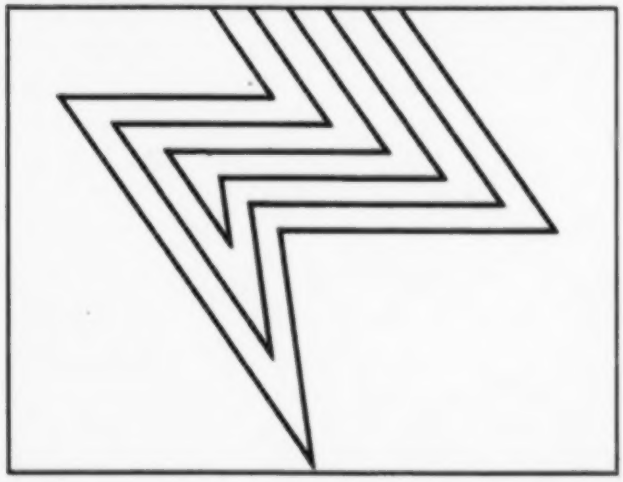
During the International Year of the Child in 1979, UNICEF focused on the needs of children with disabilities—hearing, sight, and speech impairments, and physical and mental handicaps.

In 1979, UNICEF commissioned a study of childhood disabilities in the developing world. The report revealed that the problem is not a minor one: worldwide, one child in ten is born with or acquires a disability later in life. The report suggested imaginative ways in which the life of disabled children could be improved through simple measures undertaken by their families. In 1981, the International Year of Disabled Persons, UNICEF began to offer this kind of program within the framework of primary health care.

An example of an innovative response to childhood disabilities is the UNICEF-assisted emergency project in Mozambique.

The program includes an education component that not only focuses on rebuilding damaged schools but also places enormous emphasis on helping children who have been emotionally traumatized by the violence and atrocities of Mozambique's long civil war.

7 THE RIGHT TO BE AMONG THE FIRST TO RECEIVE RELIEF IN TIMES OF DISASTER

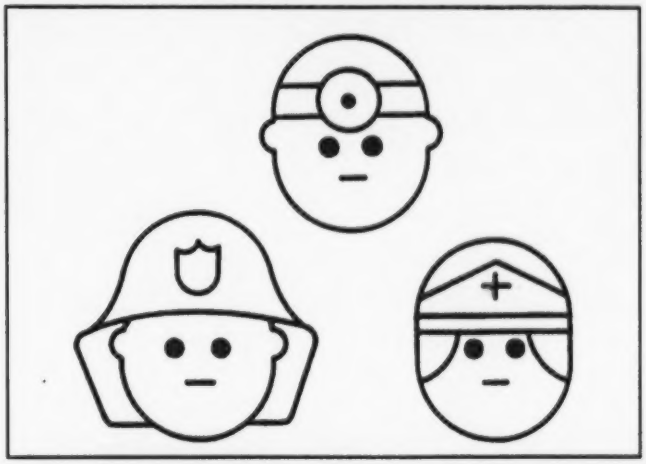


UNICEF was created in 1946 to provide food and medical aid to the children of Europe following World War II. Then known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, it gave a total of $87.6 million in assistance to children in 13 European countries from 1949 to 1950. Though this emergency was the first for UNICEF, it was certainly not the last.

Recently, natural disasters have gained worldwide attention. During the Bangladesh cyclone emergency, the majority of the people at risk were children and mothers. UNICEF expanded programs already in existence—such as water supply and primary health care—to help deal with the emergency. Within hours of the disaster, UNICEF provided lifesaving oral rehydration salts, vaccines, medicines, food, and water purification tablets.

In times of disaster, UNICEF uses existing programs—immunization, nutrition, basic health care, water supply— to provide help. It tries to give help to support the long-term recovery and development of the affected area and its people.

8 THE RIGHT TO LEARN TO BE USEFUL MEMBERS OF SOCIETY AND TO DEVELOP INDIVIDUAL ABILITIES

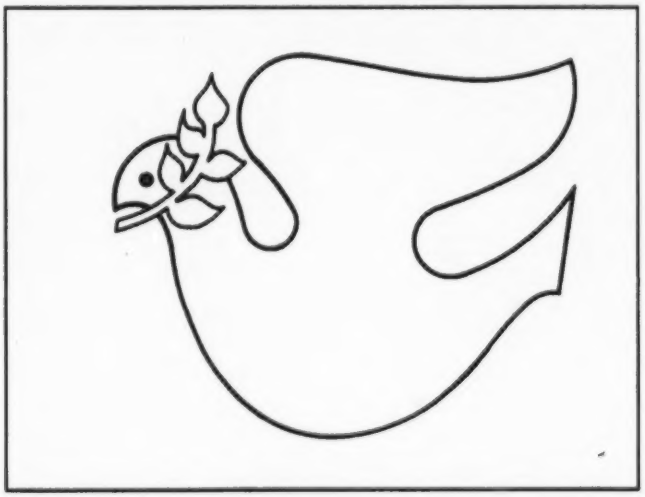


In Southeast Bogota, Colombia, is the *barrio* (or community) of Buenos Aires. This is a poor community. Half of the population is made up of children. Half the adults and youth are unemployed, and the others have low-paying jobs. Because schools are overcrowded, children attend classes in shifts. It used to be that, for half of every day, they had no place to go but the streets.

UNICEF and the government of Colombia chose Buenos Aires to be the site of a project to encourage young people to develop community responsibility and pride while they learn useful skills. The children range in age from 12 to 18, and they call themselves "The Group for Social Union and Renewal—the Bees" (*Las Abejas* in Spanish).

Las Abejas have organized garbage clean-ups and training programs, such as dressmaking and hairdressing. They operate recreation and cultural activities for children when they are out of school. These young people have helped their *barrio* to take pride in itself and to make changes.

9 THE RIGHT TO BE BROUGHT UP IN THE SPIRIT OF UNIVERSAL PEACE AND BROTHERHOOD



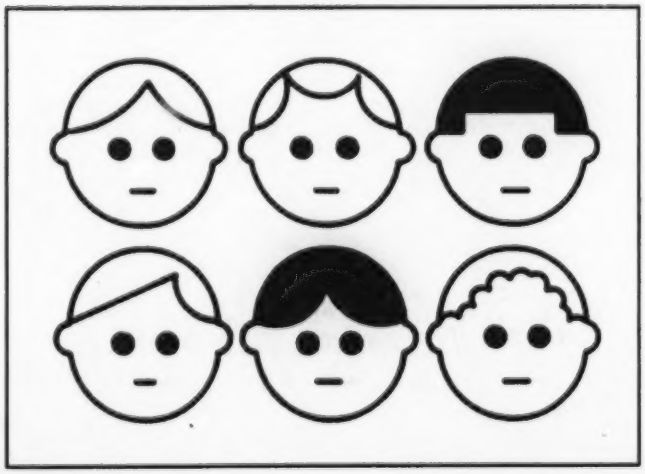
An example of the spirit of universal brotherhood is children collecting money at Halloween to help other children.

The idea of organizing children to collect "Trick-or-Treat" money for UNICEF on Halloween originated with the pastor of a small church in Pennsylvania. In 1950, his Sunday School class raised $17, and they sent it to UNICEF. A high point was reached in 1966 when Pope Paul VI, visiting the U.N., was met by a group of children carrying their UNICEF "Trick-or-Treat" boxes.

In 1965, UNICEF was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway, "for the promotion of brotherhood among nations." The awarding of this prize to UNICEF recognized that the well-being of today's children is inseparable from the peace of tomorrow's world.

During the 1992 National UNICEF Day campaign American children raised over $2 million in their orange boxes. They continue to carry on the spirit of children helping children through universal peace and understanding by using the famous orange UNICEF boxes.

10 THE RIGHT TO ENJOY THESE RIGHTS regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national or social origin



No child is born with a prejudice against another. The mandate given to UNICEF in 1946 by the General Assembly of the U.N. emphasized UNICEF's non-political nature, saying that all assistance should be given "on the basis of need, without discrimination because of race, creed, nationality, status, or political belief." UNICEF met this requirement by providing help to children in European countries from both sides of the World War.

Advocacy has also been an essential part of the work of UNICEF to help people become aware of the needs of children and how UNICEF can meet those needs. The aim of this advocacy is to influence public policy to enlarge resources for all children.

UNICEF's children have many friends. Danny Kaye traveled world-wide for over 30 years, bringing the message of children's needs and rights. Since then, many other celebrities have served as Goodwill Ambassadors.

LET'S GET ACTIVE!

Enlarge these activity cards on the photocopier and use as task cards for your study of The Rights of the Child

1. Write a story or poem about affection, love, and understanding.

2. Create Valentine's Day cards. Sell them to friends, and donate the money to UNICEF.

3. Write a letter to President Clinton about the *Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

1. Draw a picture of a typical meal of an undernourished child. Add foods that would help make it a balanced meal.

2. Keep a food diary for one week. What changes would make your diet healthier?

3. Skip a snack, and give the money to the U.S. Committee for UNICEF.

1. Put on a play about children who need help from a protection agency, such as the Police Department, Fire Department, or a social welfare group.

2. Find out how many homeless children there are in your state. What causes homelessness? What is your community doing to help homeless children?

1. Organize a "Play Day" in your school. Join your classmates in team games and games from other countries.

2. Discuss why play and recreation are included in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child.* What happens to children who have no time to play?

1. Do a class project on your heritage, or roots. Join in games and songs from the countries represented by your classmates' heritages.

2. Organize a class lunch and ask your classmates to bring food that is typical of their ethnic backgrounds.

1. List the ways in which people are disabled. What types of care can help them?

2. Do a survey on whether your school or community has ways that make it easier for disabled people to get around. If not, what can be done to improve things?

3. Make a list of famous people who are disabled, and discuss their contributions to society.

1. Study areas where recent disasters have occurred. What caused the disasters? What type of relief was provided? Is your community prepared to take care of children in a disaster?

2. Donate one or more cans of food to a local food bank to help in case of a local disaster.

1. Discuss what you want to do when you grow up. How will your work contribute to your community?

2. Have a "Career Day" in your school. Invite people from different professions to talk about their careers.

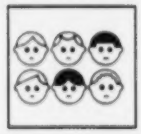
3. Hold a read-a-thon. Collect donations, and give the money to the U.S. Committee for UNICEF.

1. Write a story about what it means to be brought up in the spirit of peace. Share it with others.

2. Make a class book of writings about peace.

3. Create a mobile that contrasts war and peace.

4. Illustrate symbols that relate to peace.



1. List the races and religions of your classmates and learn something about each group represented.

2. What we think of as being "ours" sometimes comes from another society. Horses, or example, were brought here from Spain; sandwiches started in England in the 18th century. Find other examples.

For more information about UNICEF, contact your local UNICEF office or write to the U.S. Committee for UNICEF, 333 E. 38th Street, New York, NY 10016. (212) 922-2510.

United States Committee for

unicef

United Nations Children's Fund